

Shingrix[®] Vaccine

Shingles

The **Shingrix[®] vaccine** is recommended for all adults over the age of 50 to prevent shingles disease and its associated complications. In Yukon, Shingrix[®] is offered for free to adults between the ages of 65 and 79 years old. **Shingles** is caused by the varicella-zoster virus, which also causes chickenpox. In some people who have had chickenpox, the virus becomes active again later in life and causes shingles.

The **Shingrix[®] vaccine** is a two-dose series, administered 2 to 6 months apart.

Shingles can cause:

- A rash occurring in a single strip around one side of the body
- Pain, itching, or tingling in area of rash
- Fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Upset stomach

Complications may lead to:

- Post-herpetic neuralgia (severe, long-lasting nerve pain)
- Vision or hearing loss
- Scarring
- Bacterial infection
- Nerve damage
- Pneumonia
- Brain inflammation (encephalitis)

Why is the shingles vaccine recommended?

Nearly 1 in 3 people will develop shingles in their lifetime. It is also more common in those with weakened immune systems. Both the risk of developing shingles and the severity of the infection increase sharply after the age of 50. The treatment options for shingles and its complications have limited effectiveness. Shingrix[®] is 90% effective at reducing the risk of developing shingles and lessens the severity of the infection if it does develop.

Possible side effects of the vaccine:

Common reactions to the immunization may include headaches and redness, tenderness, and swelling at the injection site. Some may develop a fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. These are generally mild and last 1-2 days.

Side effects of the immunization are easily relieved by: Applying a cold/damp compress to the site, administering acetaminophen or ibuprofen for temperatures 38.5°C or higher. See your health care provider if your symptoms are severe or last longer than 48 hours.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any immunization because there is a rare possibility of developing a severe allergic reaction which is treatable at the clinic. This happens to fewer than 1 in 1 million people. If it happens after you leave the clinic, call 911 or the local emergency number.

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